

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. No new matter has been added by way of the amendments. Moreover, for the reasons noted below, the amendments place this application in condition for allowance. Entry of the amendments and consideration of the remarks is respectfully requested. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that one or more claims contain allowable subject matter.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-26 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 8, 15, and 18, have been cancelled by this response. Therefore, claims 2-7, 9-14, 16-17, and 19-26 are pending after the amendments. Claims 6, 20, 25, and 26, as amended, are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from independent claims 20, 25, and 26.

Claim Objections

Claim 15 is objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c) as being of improper dependent form. Claim 15 is cancelled in this response, rendering this objection moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 1-5, 7, 18-19, and 21-24

Claims 1-5, 7, 18-19, and 21-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2004/0167498, by Azar et. al. ("Azar"). Claims 1 and 18 have been cancelled by this response, rendering the rejection of these two claims moot.

Claim 25 has been indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter and

has been rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 2-4, 5, and 7, are amended in this response to depend from allowable claim 25. Claim 3 now depends from claim 25 through its dependency on claim 2.

Claim 20 has been indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter and has been rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 19 and 21-24 are amended in this response to depend from allowable claim 20.

In view of the above, claims 2-5, 7, 19, and 21-24, which now depend from allowable independent claims 25, and 20, respectively, are patentable over Azar for at least the same reasons as claims 25 and 20. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 8-17

Claims 8-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,066,164, issued to Macher et al. ("Macher"). Claims 8 and 15 are cancelled in this response, rendering the rejection of these two claim moot.

Claim 26 was indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter, and has been rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 9-11, 13-14, and 16-17, are amended in this response to depend from allowable claim 26. Claim 12 now depends from claim 26 through its dependence on intervening claim 11.

For at least these reasons, claims 9-14 and 16-17 are patentable over Macher. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 8-17

Claims 8-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No.

6,235,049, issued to Nazerian ("Nazerian"). Claims 8 and 15 are cancelled in this response, rendering the rejection of these claim moot.

Claim 26 was indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter, and has been rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 9-11, 13-14, and 16-17, are amended in this response to depend from allowable claim 26. Claim 12 now depends from claim 26 through its dependence on intervening claim 11.

For at least these reasons, claims 9-14 and 16-17 are patentable over Nazerian. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In Summary, all remaining claims in this application now depend either directly, or through an intervening dependent claim, from an allowable independent claim. Accordingly, all remaining claims in this application are believed patentable and Applicant believes the application has now been placed in condition for allowance.

Claim Renumbering

In anticipation of the allowability of this application, Applicant respectfully requests the reordering and renumbering of claims under 37 C.F.R. § 1.126, as follows:

Claim 6 renumbered and reordered as claim 1.

Claims 2-5 renumbered as claims 3-6.

Claims 25 and 26 renumbered and reordered as claims 2 and 8, respectively.

Claims 16-17 renumbered and reordered as claims 15-16, respectively.

Claim 20 renumbered and reordered as claim 17.

Claim 19 renumbered and reordered as claim 18.

Claims 21-24 renumbered and reordered as claims 19-22, respectively.


After renumbering and reordering of claims, claims 1, 2, 8, and 17 will be independent, with the remaining claims depending, directly or indirectly, from claims 2, 8, and 17.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 17090/002001).

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Respectfully submitted,

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